

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-20

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: US, CI, OREF

SUBJECT: US POLICY TOWARD REFUGEES

1. WASHINGTON POST DECEMBER 1 CARRIED STORY UNDER HEAD-
LINE "US SOFTENS ENTRY RULES FOR LEFTIST CAUGHT IN
CHILE." TEXT FOLLOWS.

2. QUOTE. THE UNITED STATES HAS OFFERED TO ALLOW FOREIGN
REFUGEES STRANDED IN CHILE AFTER THE SEPTEMBER MILITARY
COUP TO IMMIGRATE TO THE UNITED STATES UNDER A SPECIAL
"PAROLE" ARRANGEMENT ALLOWING THEM TO BYPASS CERTAIN IM-
MIGRATION RESTRICTIONS.

3. THE U.S. OFFER WAS MADE TO THE UN HIGH COMMISSION FOR
REFUGEES MORE THAN A MONTH AGO, BUT SO FAR FEWER THAN
30 PERSONS HAVE APPLIED TO COME TO THE UNITED STATES.

4. THIS IS A TINY PROPORTION OF THE ESTIMATED 3,000 FOR-
EIGNERS, MAINLY FROM OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES,
BELIEVED TO HAVE TAKEN REFUGE IN EMBASSIES, PRIVATE HOMES
AND SEVERAL "SAFE HAVENS" IN CHILE SET UP BY THE UN REF-
UGEE OFFICE.

5. MOST OF THE REFUGEES ARE LEFTISTS WHO FLED THEIR
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COUNTRIES FOR POLITICAL REASONS AND WERE WELCOMED TO

CHILE BY THE SOCIALIST-LED GOVERNMENT OF THE LATE PRES-

IDENT SALVADOR ALLENDE. THE MILITARY MEN WHO LED THE SEPT 11 COUP IN WHICH ALLENDE DIED CONDUCTED A HARSH CAMPAIGN AGAINST FOREIGN "EXTREMISTS" AND ARRESTED HUNDREDS OF FOREIGNERS IN THE FIRST WEEKS AFTER THE COUP.

6. USE OF THE "PAROLE" SYSTEM TO BRING IN REFUGEES FROM CHILE WAS SUGGESTED LAST MONTH BY SEN. EDWARD M. KENNEDY (D.-MASS.) CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE REFUGEE SUBCOMMITTEE.

7. THE SYSTEM HAS BEEN USED IN THE PAST TO ALLOW HUNGARIAN AND CUBAN REFUGEES TO ENTER THE UNITED STATES WITHOUT GOING THROUGH THE USUAL LENGTHY BUREAUCRATIC PROCESSES.

8. STATE DEPARTMENT SOURCES SUGGESTED THAT THE NUMBER OF APPLICANTS FROM CHILE WAS LOW BECAUSE MANY OF THE REFUGEES WOULD NOT CONSIDER THE UNITED STATES A "CONGENIAL" PLACE TO LIVE AND BECAUSE THEY WERE AWARE OF THE STRICT "SECURITY AND POLITICAL" RESTRICTIONS ON IMMIGRANTS TO THE UNITED STATES.

9. SOURCES WHO HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING THE REFUGEES' SITUATION, HOWEVER, SAID THAT CONDITIONS IN CHILE ARE SO BAD AND THERE ARE SO FEW PLACES FOR THE REFUGEES TO GO THAT MANY ARE DESPERATE TO LEAVE.

10. A CABLE SENT TO THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES FROM REFUGEES LIVING UNDER UN PROTECTION SAID: "WE CONSIDER THE SECURITY CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH WE EXIST TO BE PRECARIOUS AND FULL OF SERIOUS DANGER."

11. SOME EUROPEAN AND LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES HAVE AGREED TO ACCEPT SMALL NUMBERS OF REFUGEES, AND AS OF NOV. 13 ALMOST 250 HAD LEFT, STATE DEPARTMENT SOURCES SAID. END QUOTE. KISSINGER

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